

REMARKS

Claims 66-90 are in the application. Claims 1-65 are canceled.

In the Office Communication mailed May 24, 2004, the Examiner notified Applicant that a previously submitted Preliminary Amendment was not entered because, according to the Examiner, it claimed nine different inventions, denoted (a) through (i), which the Examiner asserts are distinct and independent from the invention previously claimed. Accordingly, the Examiner issued a restriction requirement.

In response, Applicant provisionally elects, with traverse, claims from group (b), which claims were previously numbered 103-120, 125-127, and 131-134 in the Preliminary Amendment. In this Response, these elected claims are numbered 66-90.


Claims 66-90 are directed to an embodiment of the invention which uses a wafer transfer mechanism already “disposed” within a CVD or CMP system for transferring wafers within the system. The wafer transfer mechanism in this embodiment also performs the function of supporting the wafers while they are illuminated and imaged. Advantages in terms of cost and space reductions are realized since a separate transfer mechanism for the illumination/imaging function is not required. These claims are fully supported by the embodiment described beginning on page 8 and illustrated in Figure 3. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are directed to an invention that is not separate and distinct from that claimed in original claim 15, which recites a “translation mechanism . . . integral with equipment for manufacturing semiconductor microelectronics.” The translation mechanism, being “integral with” . . . “equipment for manufacturing semiconductor microelectronics,” performs a transfer function in relation to this equipment. And, as recited in original claim 1, from which claim 15 depends, this translation mechanism also supports the recited imaging function. In sum, claims 66-90 and original 15 are not directed to separate and distinct inventions.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter this Response, including claims 66-90.

Applicant does not believe that any fees are due for filing this response. If any fees are in fact due, please charge the same to our deposit account number **08-3038** referencing Howrey docket number 02578.0006.CPUS01.

Respectfully submitted,

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